

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 03578 131106Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 OES-06 NRC-05 ERDA-05
EUR-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00
SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /079 W
-----131111Z 052617 /22

O 130948Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 908

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 3578

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION ISLAMABAD INFO KARACHI FROM LAHORE
APRIL 13 REPEATED YOU:

QUOTE CONFIDENTIAL LAHORE 0361

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PK
SUBJECT: BHUTTO PRESS INTERVIEW

REF: KARACHI 1726

1. MARK GAYN, REPORTER FOR THE TORONTO STAR, CALLED
AT CONGEN APRIL 12 AND SHARED WITH US CONTENTS OF TWO
HOUR CONVERSATION HE HAD WITH BHUTTO EARLIER IN AFTERNOON
SAME DAY.

2. GAYN, WHO HAS MET BHUTTO A NUMBER OF TIMES OVER THE
LAST TEN YEARS, SAID THAT THE PM WAS SHRILL AND LOOKED
VERY TIRED. AT SEVERAL POINTS IN THE CONVERSATION HE
SAID BHUTTO'S VOICE CRACKED. THE PM NOTED THAT THE CURRENT
CRISIS IS A WAR OF NERVES AND IT'S A QUESTION OF WHO WILL
PETER OUT FIRST. NEVERTHELESS, GAYN SAID, PM GAVE A
"VIRTUOSO PERFORMANCE."

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PAGE 02 ISLAMA 03578 131106Z

3. BHUTTO SAID HE HAD THREE OPTIONS TO DEAL WITH THE
OPPOSITION. ONE IS TO ENTER INTO A DIALOGUE, WHICH IS THE
MOST SENSIBLE WAY AND THE ONE HE PREFERRED. A SECOND,
IF THE OPPOSITION REFUSES TO NEGOTIATE, WOULD BE TO TAKE
STRICT ACTION AND GOVERN WITH THE PRESENT NATIONAL AND
PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLIES. THIRDLY, BHUTTO SAID THE HOUSE
(NATIONAL ASSEMBLY) CAN BE DISSOLVED IF IT BEGINS TO

"MISBEHAVE." IF THERE IS "MONKEY BUSINESS" AND IT DOES NOT SUPPORT REFORMS THEN NEW ELECTIONS COULD BE HELD. HOWEVER, BHUTTO SAID THIS MUST BE DONE IN A PROPER, CONSTITUTIONAL WAY. GAYN REPEATEDLY QUESTIONED THE PM ABOUT THIS POINT, BUT BHUTTO DID NOT CLARIFY UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES, AND WHEN, HE MIGHT TAKE SUCH ACTION.

4. ACCORDING TO GAYN, BHUTTO SAID THERE ARE OTHER STEPS HE CAN ALSO TAKE TO HELP SOLIDIFY HIS POSITION, SUCH AS ANNOUNCING PAY RAISES AT THE END OF THIS MONTH. THE ABILITY TO SEIZE THE HEADLINES AND TAKE THE KIND OF INITIATIVES OPEN TO ANY HEAD OF STATE, BHUTTO MAINTAINED, ARE STILL WITH HIM. PM CLAIMED HIS MINISTERS WANT HIM TO UNLEASH PPP WORKERS AND OPPOSE THE OPPOSITION IN THE STREETS, BUT THAT HE HAS FOR FAR REFUSED. PERHAPS 36 PERCENT OF THE PEOPLE HATE ME, BHUTTO SAID, BUT THE BULK VOTED FOR ME.

5. PM ASSERTED THAT HE IS HUMBLE. HE SAID I COME FROM A VILLAGE AND WEAR PEASANT CLOTHES WHEN I MEET THE PEOPLE, BUT AS A LEADER I HAVE MY PRIDE. I ALWAYS HAVE AN EYE ON WHAT HISTORY WILL SAY ABOUT ME. PEOPLE MAY HATE MY GUTS, BUT THEY WILL SAY I CAN GOVERN THE COUNTRY. I WANT HISTORY TO REMEMBER THAT I MADE PAKISTAN AN IMPORTANT COUNTRY (AGAIN) IN SOUTH ASIA.

6. NUCLEAR ISSUE: BHUTTO SAID A CONTRACT HAS BEEN SIGNED WITH FRANCE FOR THE REPROCESSING PLANT AND HE COULD NOT REVOKE IT. IF THE FRENCH WISH TO DO SO, THAT'S UP TO THEM. THE REPROCESSING PLANT, HE ASSERTED, IS A SYMBOL, A POINT CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 ISLAMA 03578 131106Z

OF HONOR, A MATTER OF PRIDE. IT CAN'T BE DROPPED.

7. BHUTTO SAID WHAT YOU SEE HERE NOW IS A FRAUD BEING PLAYED OUT BY THE PASSING ORDER (PNA ALLIANCE). WHEN GAYN ASKED ABOUT HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD THE OPPOSITION, BHUTTO REPLIED THAT HE HAS CONSIDERED THE MOVES THEY CAN MAKE AND THE MOVES HE CAN MAKE IN RESPONSE. GAYN SAID HE DID NOT EXPRESS ANY HATRED OR CONTEMPT FOR THE PNA, BUT RATHER VIEWED THEM AS A PROBLEM HE MUST DEAL WITH ONE WAY OR ANOTHER. IT APPEARED TO GAYN THAT BHUTTO STILL BELIEVES HE HAS A NUMBER OF OPTIONS OPEN TO HIM, AND THAT HE IS NOT PREPARED AT THIS STAGE TO GIVE UP. GAMON UNQUOTE BYROADE

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 13-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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